

MEMORANDUM

TO: Town of Arlington Traffic Advisory Committee
FROM: Bryan Zimolka, PE, ENV SP
Senior Transportation Project Manager
DATE: April 12, 2023
RE: Massachusetts Avenue Improvements – Abutter Concerns

Dear Committee Members,

Nitsch Engineering has been retained by the 1165R Mass Ave residential development owners (a partnership of Mirak Properties and Spaulding & Slye Investments) to address the traffic and parking concerns related to the reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue from Richards Avenue to Quinn Road. The intent of this memorandum is to provide the Town of Arlington's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) with an overview of the issues and concerns in advance of the public meeting on April 12, 2023. Following the meeting, we will submit a detailed memorandum that provides our review of the traffic study conducted for the corridor improvement, a comparison to the Traffic Impact Report conducted for 1165R Mass Ave Apartments, and alternative improvement recommendations.

Based on the corridor plan, dated March 15, 2023, the 1165R Mass Ave residential development owners have specific concerns with the addition of the traffic signal at the Massachusetts Avenue/Forest Street/Burton Street intersection as well as the removal of on-street parking along the south side of Massachusetts Avenue adjacent to the property. It is our understanding that the design is through the 25% design submission process and that the applicant has applied for a MassWorks grant. As part of the of the process, there should be an abutter outreach and comment solicitation. Abutting property owners and business owners in the Mass Ave block between Forest Street and Quinn Road - 1165R Mass Ave residential development, Work Bar, DeVito Funeral Home, Robert J. Annese Esquire, Mirak Hyundai, Mirak Chevrolet - were not part of the abutter outreach by the Town or its consultant nor were they engaged in the public review of this plan.

In the 1165R Mass Ave Apartments Traffic Impact Report, dated May 12, 2021, we reviewed the potential of installing a traffic signal at the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Forest Street/Burton Street. At the time, it was not deemed appropriate. Further, a study prepared by the Town in 2011 to address safety concerns at the Appleton Street/Massachusetts Avenue intersection did not suggest a traffic light be added to the Massachusetts Avenue/Forest Street/Burton Street intersection. Upon review of the concept drawing, the westbound stop bar is proposed right at the main driveway entrance to the Mirak and Annese properties. With the potential queuing created by the signal, it is highly likely that the driveway will be blocked during crucial peak hours. As described in our Traffic Impact Report, this driveway is a crucial entrance for the 1165R Mass Ave residential development, as well as the other properties, and crucial to reducing the amount of traffic onto Ryder Street. It is our opinion that alternative mitigation measures can be explored that do not negatively impact access to the Mirak site and increase traffic on Ryder Street.

With regards to the elimination of on-street parking, these spaces are crucial to maximize the available parking for all property owners along this corridor. Current and future tenants rely on not just the amount of available parking in the area but also the parking proximate to their business. If half of the parking in this area is

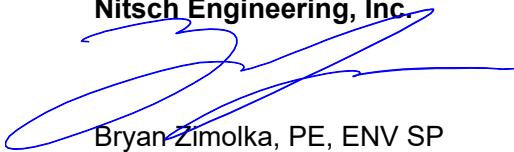
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eliminated, it may negatively affect the business operations. There have been numerous case studies on the benefits of providing safe and efficient multi-modal transportation, however, similar to alternatives to the traffic signal, we think alternative solutions can be explored that do not eliminate as much parking as proposed.

At this point, the 1165R Mass Ave residential development owners request that TAC hold on approval of the corridor redesign until the abutters have ample time to review the information and provide feedback on the design. Nitsch Engineering will review the traffic study conducted for the corridor redevelopment and provide alternative solutions that improve safety, maximize efficiency, and maintain access and parking to the adjacent businesses.

Very truly yours,

Nitsch Engineering, Inc.



Bryan Zimolka, PE, ENV SP
Senior Project Manager